

RESOLUTION OF THE BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

DETERMINATION AND FINDINGS RELATIVE TO THE
CONDITION OF THE PARK PLAZA PROJECT AREA

WHEREAS, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (hereinafter the "Authority") is a public body politic and corporate duly organized and existing under Chapter 121B of the Massachusetts General Laws within the City of Boston, Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, the Authority proposes to prepare an Urban Renewal Plan for that area in the Central Business District in the City of Boston (hereinafter the "Park Plaza Project Area") described in Exhibit A, which is attached hereto and made a part hereof, and proposes to undertake an Urban Renewal Project therein; and

WHEREAS, the Authority proposes to advertise for developer interest in the Park Plaza Project Area; and

WHEREAS, the Authority has conducted surveys, studies, and inspections of the Park Plaza Project Area; and

WHEREAS, in its Resolution dated October 14, 1965 entitled "Determinations and Findings Relative to the Condition of the Central Business District Urban Renewal Area and Subareas and Acquisition Areas Located Therein, Project Mass. R-82," the Authority made findings and determinations on the basis of said surveys, studies, and inspections as to the Park Plaza Project Area, the Park Plaza Project Area consisting of the "Park Square" Subarea and a portion of the "Hinge Area" Subarea described in October 14, 1965, Resolution; and

WHEREAS, in its Resolution dated August 2, 1967, entitled "Resolution of Boston Redevelopment Authority Respecting Conditions in the Central Business District Project Area," the Authority reaffirmed the findings and conclusions made in said October 14, 1965, Resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Authority has considered more recent evidence respecting conditions in the Park Plaza Project Area, including the Memorandum of the Director of the Authority dated June 18, 1970, and the attachments thereto;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED:

That the Boston Redevelopment Authority, acting under and pursuant to its powers under said Chapter 121B and any other powers thereunto enabling, does hereby reaffirm the findings and conclusions made in said October 14, 1965, Resolution; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Authority, acting under and pursuant to its powers as aforesaid, does hereby find and determine:

(1) That the Park Plaza Project Area is a decadent area in that it is an area which is detrimental to safety, health, morals, welfare, and sound growth of the Boston community, because of the existence of buildings which are out of repair, physically deteriorated, unfit for human habitation, or obsolete, and in need of major maintenance and repair, and because buildings have been torn down and not replaced and under existing conditions it is improbable that the buildings will be replaced, and because of a substantial change in business and economic conditions, and because of inadequate light, air, and open space, and because of excessive land coverage, and because diversity of ownership, irregular lot sizes, and obsolete street patterns make it improbable that the Park Plaza Project Area will be redeveloped by the ordinary operation of private enterprise; and

(2) That the Park Plaza Project Area is ^{DECADENT} ~~blighted and deteriorated and deteriorating; and~~

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED:

~~That the Director of the Authority is authorized to advertise the availability of a Developer's Kit respecting the Park Plaza Project Area in such newspapers, periodicals, and other publications and at such times as the Director in his discretion may deem advisable.~~

Deleted

EXHIBIT A

PARK PLAZA PROJECT

PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION

The Park Plaza Project Area is bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the southerly sideline of Beach Street and the extended easterly sideline of Knapp Street;

Thence running in a generally southerly direction along said easterly sideline of Knapp Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the easterly sideline of Knapp Street extended and the centerline of Kneeland St.;

Thence turning and running in a generally westerly direction along the centerlines of Kneeland Street and Stuart Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the centerlines of Stuart Street and Arlington Street;

Thence turning and running in a generally northerly direction along said centerline of Arlington Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the centerline of Arlington Street and the northerly sideline of Boylston Street extended;

Thence turning and running in a generally easterly direction along said northerly sideline of Boylston Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the northerly sideline of Boylston Street and the westerly sideline of Bumstead Court;

Thence turning and running in a generally southerly direction along said westerly sideline of Bumstead Court extended to a point, said point being the intersection of the westerly sideline of Bumstead Court extended and the southerly sideline of Boylston Street;

Thence turning and running in a generally easterly direction along said southerly sideline of Boylston Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the southerly sideline of Boylston Street extended and the easterly sideline of Washington Street;

Thence turning and running in a generally northerly direction along said easterly sideline of Washington Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the easterly sideline of Washington Street extended and the centerline of Essex Street;

Thence turning and running in a generally easterly direction along said centerline of Essex Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the centerlines of Essex Street and Harrison Avenue;

Thence turning and running in a generally southerly direction along said centerline of Harrison Avenue to a point, said point being the intersection of the centerline of Harrison Avenue and the extended northerly property line of 19-25 Harrison Avenue;

Thence turning and running in a generally westerly direction along said northerly property line of 19-25 Harrison Avenue to a point, said point being the northwesterly corner of the property at 19-25 Harrison Avenue;

Thence turning and running in a generally southerly direction along westerly property line of 19-25 Harrison Avenue to a point, said being the intersection of the extended property line of 19-25 Harrison Avenue and the northerly property line of 27-39 Harrison Avenue;

Thence turning and running in a generally westerly direction along said northerly property line of 27-39 Harrison Avenue to a point, said point being the northwesterly corner of the property at 27-39 Harrison Avenue;

Thence turning and running in a generally southerly direction along the westerly property line of 27-39 Harrison Avenue to a point, said point being the intersection of the southerly sideline of Beach Street and the extended westerly property line of 27-39 Harrison Avenue;

Thence turning and running in a generally westerly direction along said southerly sideline of Beach Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the southerly sideline of Beach Street and the extended easterly sideline of Knapp Street, which is the point and place of beginning.

MEMORANDUM

Tabled: June 4, 1970
Resubmitted: June 18, 1970

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

FROM: JOHN D. WARNER

SUBJECT: CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
PARK PLAZA PROJECT

During the past year, the Authority has received strong indications of private development interest in the area of the Central Business District bounded generally by Boylston and Stuart-Kneeland Streets between Arlington and Knapp Streets. This area was included in entirety within the original Central Business District Urban Renewal Plan, which, as you recall, has not been fully implemented because of the lack of Federal funds. The area has been viewed as a high priority renewal area for the revitalization of the downtown district. That private development will occur in this sector is evidenced by the Boston Gas Company's decision to locate their home office in Park Square. In order to capitalize on this and other developer interest and to prevent uncontrolled and haphazard redevelopment of this area, I propose to have the Authority staff formulate an Urban Renewal Plan to implement a project to be known as the "Park Plaza Project," encompassing the area outlined on the attached map.

Since there is no present expectation of Federal or State assistance, the private developers themselves would be required to pay for all land acquisition, demolition, and business and family relocation costs involved with their respective developments. The Plan would be formulated, in part, on the basis of the best development proposals for the area received from interested private parties.

At present the staff is in the process of preparing a Developers' Kit, which will be submitted to interested developers, who will be invited to come forth with their proposals for the area in question.

After development proposals have been received, and after careful staff review, a detailed Urban Renewal Plan will be prepared for the approval of the Authority, the City Council, and the State Department of Community Affairs. The Plan would call

for the construction of New Charles Street by the City pursuant to a Cooperation Agreement. As a first step in the implementation of the Plan, I recommend that the Board designate the Park Plaza Area as eligible for Urban Renewal and authorize me to advertise for development proposals.

On October 14, 1965, in connection with the preparation of the CBD Urban Renewal Plan, the Authority, in its Resolution entitled "Determinations and Findings Relative to the Condition of the Central Business District Urban Renewal Area and Subareas and Acquisition Areas Located Therein, Project Mass. R-82" (a copy of which is attached hereto), specifically found that both the so-called "Park Square" Subarea and the so-called "Hinge Area" Subarea, both of which were within the CBD Project Area, were decadent areas and therefore eligible for Urban Renewal. Park Plaza consists of all of the Park Square Subarea and substantially all of the Hinge Area Subarea. On August 2, 1967, the Authority, in its Resolution entitled "Resolution of Boston Redevelopment Authority Respecting Conditions in the Central Business District Project Area" (a copy of which is attached hereto), reaffirmed its October 14, 1965, findings relative to the condition of the Central Business District Project Area.

During the last three months, members of the Authority's staff have resurveyed the Park Plaza Area (see attached memoranda dated May 27, 1970, and June 15, 1970, from Warren Vincent to me). This new survey, together with other supporting documentation submitted herewith (see attached memoranda of Messrs. Beatty and Colby and Mrs. Larson), makes it clear that the Park Plaza Area qualifies as an Urban Renewal Project Area under Chapter 121B of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Accordingly, I recommend the adoption of the attached Resolution.

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

TO: JOHN D. WARNER, DIRECTOR

FROM: WARREN J. VINCENT

DATE: JUNE 15, 1970

SUBJECT: PARK PLAZA BUILDING CONDITION SURVEY

This report is to supplement my Park Plaza Building Condition Survey Report of May 27, 1970. Since submitting that report to you, further work has been carried out by members of the Boston Redevelopment Authority Staff to corroborate those findings.

As stated in the May 27, 1970 Report, 10 buildings classified as "Deficient" or worse in 1964 were singled out for re-entry by the Boston Redevelopment Authority Staff. Of the 10 buildings examined, 6 were still considered "Deficient", leaving 78 buildings of the total of 84 reported as "Deficient" or worse that were not given an interior examination.

It was decided that an attempt should be made to enter as many as possible of the remaining 78 buildings classified as "Deficient" or worse in the 1964 survey. To accomplish this, four two-man teams were organized under my direction from members of the BRA Staff. Of the 78, we were able to gain access to 61 buildings. We were refused entry in 8 buildings and we were unable to locate the owner or agent of the remaining 9 buildings.

However, we again reexamined the exterior of the 17 buildings that we were unable to enter and, also, members of the BRA Staff did further research of the files of the Building Department of the City of Boston, obtaining where possible the original building permits of the buildings in question.

The interior examinations did uncover several cases where renovation work had been done since the 1964 survey, for which we were unable to locate a building permit. We gave these buildings the benefit of the doubt and assumed that the work was done in accordance to the building code and accordingly upgraded their classifications. However, we also discovered several cases of advanced deterioration that could be hazardous to life.

A table showing the revised classifications of the buildings in the Park Plaza Project follows:

| Block | Total No. of Buildings | No. of Deficient Buildings (inc. Column c) | No. of Bldgs. Structurally Substandard Warranting Clearance | No. of Bldgs. which may be Acquired |
|---------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| S2B3A | 4 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| S2B3B | 13 | 5 | 3 | 13 |
| S2B4A | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 377 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 378 | 10 | 10 | 4 | 10 |
| 379 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 380 | 12 | 12 | 7 | 12 |
| 391 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| 392 | 20 | 15 | 6 | 20 |
| 393 | 42 | 23 | 9 | 40 |
| 394 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 8 |
| 397A | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| 396-407 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| <u>TOTALS</u> | 120 | 81 | 36 | 117 |

Of the 120 buildings in the project area, it was found that 81 (68%) are "Deficient" or worse and that 36 (30%) are sub-standard structurally to a degree requiring clearance.

The following major structural defects were found in the 61 buildings of which complete interior and exterior surveys were completed - which buildings comprise an accurate sample of, and fairly represent, all the buildings in the Project Area.

Fifty-six (56%) of the buildings surveyed contain inadequate or unsafe plumbing, heating or electrical facilities.

In 21 buildings, there are cracks in the base material on inside walls or loose, missing or broken base material or evidence of major leaks.

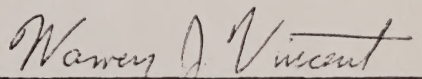
The floors of 11 buildings are sagging or pitched.

Roofs are sagging, or out of line, or roofing material is loose, missing or deteriorated in 14 buildings.

In 12 buildings, the exterior surface of foundations and basements are loose, broken or deteriorated, or the exterior foundation is deteriorated, or the columns or piers are loose, missing, or deteriorated, or the framing is split or deteriorated.

There are 11 buildings that have exterior walls with missing, or deteriorated masonry or joints or siding or have walls out of plumb.

Deficiencies and structurally unsound buildings are in general distributed throughout the Project Area.



Warren J. Vincent
Project Engineer

WJV:jml

cc: W. Haynsworth
W. Orpin
D. Beatty

